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THE
MINISTRY AS A PROFESSION

Three Addresses

DELIVERED BEFORE THE DIVINITY CLUB OF THE HARVARD DIVINITY SCHOOL

BY

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DIVINITY SCHOOL OF HARVARD UNIVERSITY
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These addresses, arranged for by the Divinity Club of the Harvard Divinity School, were delivered before the members of the Club and other students of the University who were considering the ministry as a vocation. By the generous permission of the speakers they have been published by the School, that they may reach a larger audience than that to which they were delivered, and aid other young men who would know the opportunities and requirements of the Christian ministry.

W. W. FENN,
Dean of the Harvard Divinity School.

May 15, 1907.

THE CLAIMS OF THE MINISTRY UPON STRONG MEN.

BY REV. GEORGE A. GORDON, D.D.

I mean by strong men persons of intellectual power, who are at the same time persons of high moral ideals and intense moral enthusiasms. By the ministry I mean the service of a Christian preacher in some one of the various churches of our time. If our men of intellectual power are not at the same time men of high moral ideals and intense moral enthusiasms, the ministry has no claims upon them. It does not want them; they are not fitted to teach religion because they are not experts in it. They are not experts in it because they are without first-hand, abundant, and joyous knowledge of it. Such persons become by their intellectual power a damaging influence upon religion; they lead the public to think that the intellect has little or nothing to do with religion; they stimulate a revolt against reason and a return to fanaticism. It must be repeated, therefore, that our strong man is one whose chief interest in life is moral and spiritual. He is one whose governing aspiration is for excellence of being, high bearing in his relations with men and with God. A young man of intellectual power may be sure of his fitness for the ministry if his whole heart kindles into flame as he reads and ponders these words: "Blessed are they that hunger and thirst after righteousness: for they shall be filled."

The first reason why young men of this character should enter the ministry is found in the fact that religion

is a fundamental human interest, and should not be allowed to rest in incompetent hands. We know what happens when other great human interests are left in incompetent hands. What would become of the community if the practice of medicine should fall into the hands of quacks? Here we are swift, and yet none too swift, to see the calamity that would follow if this vast interest should be committed to ignorant and perverse men. The same issue of woe is inevitable when economics, art, science, sanitation, government, and philosophy are intrusted to the incompetent. Respecting all human interests, we may use the words of the Hebrew seer: "Woe to thee, O land, when thy king is a child." That is always a calamity, and the greater the interest thus outraged, the greater the woe.

Religion is the sovereign interest of man. It is the strongest force in human history, it is the deepest fact in human nature. Modern scholars have brought us face to face with the universality and the momentousness of religion. There are to-day many great living religions; they attest the religious nature of the race to which we belong. Modern scholars have not only shown us with convincing power the universality and vitality of religion; they have shown us also the tendency of great religions to degenerate. This degeneration has run riot in all the greater religions of the East; it has run riot in Christianity. The most tragic chapter in the history of Europe is that which records the confusion of Christianity with alien and inferior cults, the resolution of the sublime religion of Jesus Christ into a vast compound of the true and the false, of the credible and the incredible. This degeneration has been brought upon the gospel of Christ because the teachers and preachers of Christ's religion have been, in many cases, unequal

to the trust committed to them. This degeneration has been brought upon the gospel of Christ chiefly because in some communions some of the time, and in other communions all of the time, teachers and preachers of the gospel have been conspicuously incompetent. Who can stand in the Church of the Holy Sepulchre in Jerusalem, and witness the service there, without inexpressible sorrow, without confessing his inability to find in the degraded religion even the marred features of the religion of Jesus? The ministers who conduct that ceremonial are sincere, but ignorant, devout, but fanatical, loyal to the supreme human interest, but infinitely incompetent. If it were music that men thus shamefully treated, or painting, or sculpture, or building, or poetry, or history, or science, the world would break forth in ridicule and scorn. When it is religion, the world suffers in silence over this degeneration and woe.

Preachers are needed who are qualified to teach the ideas of Jesus. His idea of man personal and social, his idea of God in his relation to men and races of men, his vision of eternal life in this temporal world and his conception of the kingdom of Infinite Love, are of supreme concern to our modern world. Is it not worth while to perpetuate this high teaching? And do we not need men of power for this service?

The work of the preacher is not exhausted in the office of teacher. His great aim in the presentation of ideas is to affect the heart. His chief purpose is to make character after the type of Jesus Christ. The success of this endeavor is essential to the life of civilized man. It is essential to the perpetuity of the American Republic. And only men great in character can render this supremely desirable and supremely difficult service; only they can create character of their own type; only

they can fashion the hearts of men after the pattern of Jesus Christ.

The preacher sets himself to continue in the earth the Master's work of mercy. There is the army of the unsuccessful, the host caught and overwhelmed in the tragedy of the world, the multitude left behind and abandoned to their fate by those who ride in the triumphant chariots of progress; and, besides, there is the multitude of those that mourn, whose love is lost and whose hope is dead. Here is a region of life known to few as it is to the Christian minister. Here the sympathies and the wise services of a great nature act like the strong sunshine upon the earth in the grip of winter. Here the wilderness and the solitary place rejoice, and the desert blossoms as the rose. Here the tradition of Christ's compassion repeats itself, and in so doing renews the immemorial miracle of the upright and loving soul.

To bring in a great fellowship among men and between men and God is the comprehensive aim of the preacher. To use in the interest of this high fellowship the gift of the teacher, the function of the maker of character, the office of the priestly soul, calls for strong men. The best word that I recall from my seminary days is the word of a Methodist preacher: "God and a fool might do as much good in the world as God and a wise man, but they have never done it." They never will do it. If our religion is to be great and to do great things, it must be in the care of great souls,—souls great in illumination and in intense and pure desire.

A second reason why young men of power should enter the ministry is found in the fact that strong men have been in this service from the beginning, and that strong men are in it to-day. The degeneration that I have referred to in history has been often resisted by

these strong men, and, when that was impossible, it has been mitigated by them. The degeneration that we all fear is now in a large and hopeful way held back by men of strength. This apostolic succession in the past pleads for renewal in the finest youth of to-day. This company of brave, contemporary servants of the supreme interest of society sends forth its appeal for reinforcements.

Strong men have served in this vocation,—that proposition is not open to doubt. A Christian preacher first introduced to Europe, to the Gentile world, the distinctive element in our civilization. The greatest man that ever sailed the Mediterranean Sea was not Pericles, nor Alexander, nor Hannibal, nor Cæsar, but Paul. His shadow lies upon Europe as does that of no other man in its history. When Europe began to renew her life in the sixteenth century, it was a Christian preacher who led the way. Our freedom began, not with any scientist, philosopher, man of letters, or man of affairs. It began with Martin Luther. We recall Origen, Athanasius, Augustine, Wickliffe, Calvin, Knox, Edwards, Channing, Parker, Bushnell, Beecher, Brooks, and through them we recall a host that no man can number who in the vocation of the preacher have wrought righteousness in the earth, and in the hearts of men have been as the flood-tide of Divine regard.

That strong men are in this service to-day is frequently called in question. To-day, it is said, the Church has golden chalices and wooden priests. There is doubtless some ground for this complaint. It originated, I believe, with Savonarola, and we know that it was the truth and no slander upon his lips. It was the habitual complaint of Emerson, although, when in the Harvard Divinity School, Emerson uttered this complaint for the last time,

Henry Ward Beecher was preaching in Brooklyn and Phillips Brooks was preaching in Boston. The Church has not always had golden chalices, but from the days of the apostles she has never been without wooden priests. If I am to judge from my own observation, extending now over many years, I must conclude that on the average there is more sense and reason, more genuine piety and wholesome human feeling, more effective administration and intense devotion among American preachers than at any other period of my existence. The shining names may be absent, the great national personalities. The preacher is subject to the limitation that always overtakes the specialist. The increased division of labor has further reduced his importance. The passing of all regard for mere officialism has taken with it a vast rubbish heap that in other days glittered like gold. These things do not count in a fair estimate. The ministry has men in it to-day of whom any calling might well be proud. In college they proved themselves, in many cases, the equals of their fellows. Their subsequent career has been that of the lover and servant of truth; and to stand among these men in this service is a dishonor to no thinker, to no scholar, to no personality, however great.

I sometimes think that a profession is in the healthiest condition, not when general attention is fixed upon its great names, but when the public is disposed to deny the existence in it of great names. Men do their best work, as a rule, before they become famous. The fame of great men, great universities, and great nations, is not without serious peril. All over this broad land to-day preachers of the gospel are studying and thinking and living as ministers in great bodies have done in no age since the apostolic age. They have inherited only

discredited systems of opinion and vast masses of unwinnowed learning. They have had to provide, under these conditions, for their people the vision of God and life's supreme consolation. They have become, by scores and hundreds, under this discipline, men of originality and depth, of great character and precious influence. It is never just or safe to argue from the absence of fame. The still small voice is the mightiest force in human history. At fitting seasons, and under the provocation of excessive contempt, it may become, as in a Luther or a Knox, a voice like the sound of many waters. Famous Russia was defeated by Japan, a nation largely without fame. Power in the end wins recognition; but, if it be power aside from the kinds usually admired, it may have long to wait. Because it is not recognized, it would be unjust and unsafe to conclude that it does not exist. While men sleep, the tide rolls to the flood; while men prate about the absence of power in the ministry to-day, that power is rising in a mighty silent service. Meanwhile we poor, brainless preachers are strong enough to do our work as in our great Task-master's eye, and quick enough to find food for mirth in the haughty manner of our critics. We know them well, we love them well, and the fear of them in no wise disturbs us.

It may be further said that the satisfactions of the ministry are such as appeal to strong men. Upon this point there is again some doubt. It is believed in certain quarters that preachers live sheltered lives, that they feed upon nothing but indiscriminate and foolish praise. A year or two in this vocation would, I am sure, be sufficient to dissipate this illusion. When in 1875 I went as a Home Missionary to Temple, Maine, the first compliment I received at the close of my first

sermon was from a veteran of the War of 1812, and ran thus: "Elder, I like to hear you preach. I have had the best sleep to-day that I have had in a month. Your voice reminds me of my mother's lullaby." Those who think ministers never hear the truth about their work are greatly mistaken. They have yet to discover that piety carries in it now and then an immense aptitude for imparting information with a sting in it. Manly men in the ministry get their full share of honest and rough treatment from their fellow-men. I discover no immunity for the preacher here, and, therefore, offer no bribe. Indeed, the memory of any minister of considerable experience is rich in examples to the contrary, and they are part of the fun of living.

Nor is there any chance for a minister to become rich. In comparison with many other vocations, preachers are poorly paid, and when the preacher's salary is large, as it sometimes is, the human suffering and the great causes of human enlightenment and relief appeal to him with irresistible power, and thus absorb much of his income. Neither dignity in the general regard nor wealth is among the inducements to enter the ministry. There are, however, other inducements that sing in the wholesome human heart.

There is the satisfaction of a noble service, one into which an honest man may put his entire nature. When the day's work is done, the worthy preacher may enjoy the reflection of having done much for which he has received no pay,—much for which there will never be the least material reward. He may know that he has served his Father in secret because of his love for the service. The chance to do that is the exclusive privilege of no profession; but in the ministry it is, I believe, larger than in any other. This habit of doing good,

with no prospect or thought of material reward, sets free in a man's heart singing voices; and the music they make is not of this world.

Another immense satisfaction of the preacher is the love that he may awaken in others for the highest things. Here we meet the teacher's satisfaction. One cannot think of Socrates walking the streets of Athens with a band of elect youth about him, careless of dress and money and the poor prizes of the world, turning the thought of his generation to the dignity of the intellectual life, without seeing in that great rough face the light of a mighty satisfaction. And in the sphere of the spirit, in the same vocation, we meet Jesus. We see his soul in his eyes as he looks upon those whose love for the Eternal he has kindled. We hear him say over one poor, wretched life that he had brought back to honor, "I have meat to eat that ye know not of." Such satisfactions all genuine servants of the mind and spirit will always have.

There is still another satisfaction in the minister's life. I mean his unique relation to his kind. He is with his people in the great crises of life. His sympathies enfold the families committed to his care when children are born, when they are dedicated by their parents in baptism to the Highest, when these children grow up and enter the glorious but perilous world of youth, when they, in turn, build homes of their own; and again in anxiety, in misfortune, in bitter grief, and in death the heart of a worthy minister of Christ is with his people. All this issues in a relation to human beings absolutely unique in this world.

The last satisfaction to which I call attention is that of overcoming difficulties. Economically, the ministry is classed among the non-productive professions. The

preacher's salary is provided from the savings of others who serve in the productive professions. That salary is not usually large, it is somewhat uncertain. The minister's tenure of office is also uncertain. Altogether, these facts are apt to chill young men as they look forward to this service. This should not be. These are difficulties to be met and overcome. They may be overcome by the creative spirit of love. Some men have the power to open new industries, to get others to believe in them, and thus to add to the productive power of society. These men are leaders in creative industry. Similar to these men are those preachers who by the power of a great nature create new interest in divine things. Men of this stamp make themselves and their cause essential to the hearts and the happiness of their parishes. They become part of the life of their people, and in consequence their income, while not large, is sufficient and sure. Men of power have made the world: they will continue to make it; and, if the ministry is an unsatisfactory profession to-day, men of power should enter it, and shape its character by their creative spirit.

THE MINISTRY FROM A PRACTICAL POINT OF VIEW.

BY RT. REV. WILLIAM LAWRENCE.

DIVINITY HALL, CAMBRIDGE, April 12, 1907.

In the *Outlook* of a few weeks ago was an article upon one of our large manufacturing cities written by a Harvard man, entitled "The City of the Dinner Pail."

"One day, as I was busy at my desk over a particularly elusive trial balance, a man older than myself by about four years entered the office. He was an athletic young fellow, whose face indicated a cheerful, energetic disposition, and his dress marked him as an Episcopal clergyman. His errand was quickly explained. He had remembered me as a member of his college society. His parish was composed of English operatives, and, as the winter had been unusually severe, many of his parishioners were in need. One case particularly interested him, and he asked me to help him find employment for the man. There was a peculiar charm of manner, a mingling of sincerity and good humor, of common sense and enthusiasm, about the rector of St. John's which at once attracted me to him, and led me the next Sunday to accept his cordial invitation to attend service at his church. . . .

"As I sat in St. John's Church that Sunday morning listening to responses in which were mingled the dialects of Lancashire and New England, I was alive, as never before, to the grandeur of this heritage. And what hearty responses these were! Listening, I understood that the people of St. John's worshipped God with whole hearts.

"It was hard to realize that these people, devout, single-hearted, enthusiastic in their quest for truth, were the same men and women who, working at the spinning frame and loom, had so often seemed to me merely the vital part of the machinery. That moment I determined to know them better, and I here record with love and gratitude that many of the happiest hours of my life have been spent in their companionship. When I left St. John's that Sunday morning, I realized that the life about me was not the dismal, sordid thing that fancy had painted it, but instead possessed an interest passing the imagination, and with an unwonted enthusiasm I sought to find my own place in it."

That Harvard man was in business, and without that inspiration he might have been nothing but a business man. Since that day he has continued to gain a broader vision of life in St. John's and has kindled higher ambitions in many boys of the parish.

Now who was the rector? He was the orator of his class at Harvard. After deciding to enter the ministry, he studied in Germany and Cambridge. Thence he went West as a missionary in a mining camp, and two or three years later was called back to this Massachusetts manufacturing city. He threw himself into the work, reaching hundreds of English mill operatives, interesting the people of the city in social questions, and was finally discovered by Chicago, where he is now the rector of a large church. I mention him simply as a typical Harvard man of an excellent sort.

Let me recall another, whom I knew well, the chief marshal of his class some forty years ago, always popular, a man of wealth. After a taste of business he entered the ministry, went West, and for a year or two was a frontier missionary. He then took a country parish in

Massachusetts, and has been in that village for some thirty-five years. A man of the finest qualities, a perfect gentleman, "buried in the village." He will not leave it, however. He is *the* man of the village. He has influenced the life of every man, woman, and child. He is a good angler, and knows all the brooks and pools. Through his influence, statesmen and lawyers who have lived in the village have become better men, and through them he has touched a wide circle. A country parson,—that is all.

Now, if these two had been business men or brokers, they might have made a comfortable fortune. To be sure, they might have failed, as many do. However, they might have been able to give for charities and education thousands of dollars, and in that way have done much towards the elevation of the community.

The powerful instrumentality in uplifting men is not money, however. It is life. You may build model tenement houses, but, unless you put finer motives into the people who move into them, the houses themselves accomplish nothing. The great gifts of to-day are not money, but gifts of large, fine, spiritual vitality; and it is to the great loss of people who give in large sums that they have to depend upon experts for advice. They lose the satisfaction of personal touch of life with life.

At a dinner of the trustees of the Carnegie Fund two or three years ago, after a member of the trustees had spoken to Mr. Carnegie in complimentary terms of the great gift which he had made, Major Henry Higginson's turn came, and he spoke somewhat as follows: "Mr. Carnegie, you, and I in a much smaller way, are under great disadvantage. It is almost impossible for us to give away money in such a way as to gain the real satis-

faction which comes through sacrifice. You have given large sums, but you claim no credit, you want no praise. You are rather relieved to get rid of that amount. It is a great privation that men who have more than enough for their comfort lose the ability to so give as to make it hurt."

The money that Major Higginson gives does not compare in its influence with the spiritual vitality which he puts into the lives of all those with whom he comes in contact. Therefore, he who enters the ministry, whether it be to go to Chicago or into a village, is doing far more for the upbuilding of the lives and character of the people than he who gives in large sums of money. What we need is the touch of heart with heart and the inspiration of the people. He therefore who becomes a stock-broker in order to make money to give away misses the finest chance.

Another thought is suggested.

There are many great evils in these days,—impurity, intemperance, misery of all sorts. People complain that Harvard University is not doing very much in that line, that it is simply educating a lot of young men who are playing baseball and football and doing a certain amount of study. Harvard University goes on the policy that the best thing she can do is to put into the country a certain number of hundreds of young men with high ideals, fine character, and with a desire to do for others. A university is not going to meet the evils of the times by knocking them on the head, but by sending out pure, spiritual life in the form of young men's characters.

Complaint is made that the Church does not tackle the problems of the day, that she ought to rise up and hit somebody, and show that she is alive. "Why does not the Church get out and join the newspapers in stopping

crime?" some one asks. "What are the ministers doing?" They are moving in and out of the houses of all classes like a shuttle in a loom; they are reaching the deeper motives of the people; and, best of all, they, and those who work with them, are touching young life, and are bringing up in the cities and villages a new generation, inspired with finer motives and purer ambitions than their fathers had. The ministers are doing their work along positive lines. They are also in the rescue work. You will find them among the tenements and lodging-houses of the worst; but the most efficient work is in the upbuilding of the characters of the young through personal contact, teaching, inspiration, example.

It is contact of life with life. He who came as the great reformer of the world, again and again, forgot the crowd that pressed upon Him, and gave his whole thought to the individual. "Son, thy sins be forgiven thee." It is thus that the ministry is reaching the evils of the time. And you will often discover that those business men who are building model tenement houses and erecting hospitals are doing their work through the inspiration that they have received, either in their youth or their manhood, from some Christian minister. The minister may not be on the board of directors, but he is indirectly in the life of the institution.

The questions of faith and belief in these days are pretty puzzling. What are we going to do about them? Those two men whom I first mentioned, in fact most university men, could easily have held themselves back from the ministry by the distrust of their own orthodoxy or faith. Had they waited until their intellectual difficulties were solved, not one of them would have entered the ministry. But they each and all

had faith in a few fundamental truths of the gospel. They believed in God; they believed in Christ, their Master. They desired to help their brethren. So they made their first step towards the ministry, and left a great many questions unanswered. They are still in the ministry, and a good many of those questions are still unanswered. But, as they have gone on, it has been one of the interesting features of their experience, and invigorating, too, that, as they have grown mentally, they have grown into a fuller and richer conception of the Christian truth; they have been getting faith into a better perspective and truer proportions. They have a creed. There is no such thing as a creedless church or a creedless person. Men are going to believe in something, even if it is wrong,—there is a creed somewhere. We, most of us, do not believe in long creeds which are a contract with the Almighty, and which, literally interpreted, cannot last more than a day, for, if our thoughts move in the next twenty-four hours, they have moved out of the literal interpretation of that long creed. There are some of us, however, who believe that simple historic creeds state certain deep and fundamental principles of the gospel, that those creeds are so deep that the structure of interpretation built upon them may be of varied forms and architecture as the generations pass on. The creed is not a contract, nor is it exactly a hymn; but it is the expression of faith in simple form, and, as I say, subject to the development, and to fresh interpretation with the development, of Christian truth and of the revelation of God. I believe in God. Why, my conception of God is very different to-day from what it was thirty years ago. It has been made different by the revelations that have come through the advance of my knowledge and experience. It is interesting to

see how theoretical questions answer themselves along the line of experience and common sense. Hundreds of honest, intelligent men enter the ministry. Those same hundreds of honest, intelligent men remain honest, and they remain intelligent, and they remain honorably in the ministry, and the answer to the theoretical question, "How can I remain in the ministry with the movement of thought?" is in the fact that men do so remain, and remain honorably and gladly. We talk of the development of science. It is, of course, great, but theology, and all the subjects associated with theology, have all developed. A minister compelled to be in practical touch with life, compelled also to think along spiritual lines, grows in mind and character.

There are three points that I have wished to bring out as features of the ministry in modern times. The minister is at work purifying society from beneath. He is putting his own spiritual personality into each individual, and is thus touching life at its closest point, and he is continually growing.

I will close by suggesting how the work of the ministry affects a man along three lines. The stock in trade of the minister is his character, and that very fact makes his work extremely interesting. A lawyer may be a small character, but a very astute and successful lawyer. A surgeon may be most skilful with the knife, but at the same time an exceedingly selfish man. The minister has got to be a man of fully developed and fine character, and everything that he reads, thinks, or does,—every experience through which he passes,—is "grist to his mill," and enriches his character. Whether, therefore, we are on a holiday or at work, whether we are reading fiction or theology, we are all the time making ourselves more efficient ministers, because we are making ourselves larger characters.

Therefore, the minister who is true to his best work is continually broadening in his interests. Of course—we all know it—there are lots of narrow ministers, and there are lots of narrow doctors and narrow lawyers. It is not a question so much of profession as it is of temperament. But a man who goes into the ministry and remains narrow remains so in spite of his calling, and not on account of his calling; for every child that you touch, every home that you enter, every book that you read, every experience that you have, radiates out into all sorts of interests, and any man who is a true minister finds himself overwhelmed with the number of his interests, and his sympathetic touch reaches out in all directions. The minister, if he be a true man, is therefore the broadest, the largest man in the community.

Finally, I name the deep satisfaction that the minister has in his work. In the first place, he touches the deepest motives. The work of a surgeon is most beneficent. He cuts off a man's leg, and saves his life. The surgeon moves on to the next patient. It is not the surgeon's business to try and change the man's character: that may remain as mean and selfish after his operation as before. The minister's business is to reach the man, and, if he does anything that is worth doing, he touches that man at his deepest motives, at the spring of his character. There is where, as I said before, the reform of the individual, of society, and of the world begins, and indeed ends,—in the moving of the deep springs of character in the people. Since we are called to them in trouble and in joy, we have an opportunity that no other man in the community has, of taking life under its most sensitive conditions, and comforting, strengthening, and inspiring it. We strike at the deepest motives, and therefore do the most efficient work in the shortest time.

We have the biggest leverage on society of any class of men, through reaching the deepest parts of man's life. We have satisfaction, also, in the gratitude of others.

How the memories of chivalrous men press on me as I talk! I think of one, a Harvard man who worked for twenty years in the ministry. That man's memory is treasured in the lives and hearts of thousands of people in three different communities in this State.

I mention another, of the class of '90. After three or four years elsewhere, he came to Boston, and went right down in the slums of the city. He had one of the prettiest little houses that you can imagine. It was an oasis of beauty, there in the midst of the poor. That man gave himself completely to the people, and the influence of his life not only went out among them, but it is in my life and that of many others who knew him. He had only a few years of it; but he could not have put his life into anything that would compare for influence, helpfulness, and cheer to the people and satisfaction to himself.

On Christmas Day I received a present,—a piece of parchment, beautifully illuminated. It was a French carol that had been translated into English by an inmate of the State Prison, and had been illuminated by another prisoner. It came to me with a beautiful letter of gratitude, because I had called upon them once in a while. I only mention this as one of the little, slight rewards of the ministry,—the recognition of simple, not great, but personal work on the part of the people whom we serve. So that in satisfaction to one's self, in satisfaction and efficiency to the community, and, we trust, in the richest sort of reward, the ministry stands supreme.

MORE HARVARD GRADUATES FOR THE MINISTRY.

BY PRESIDENT CHARLES W. ELIOT.

The American universities in general have a very strange policy toward the great subject of theology. Almost all of them exclude that supreme subject from their teaching. All of the State universities do this, and many of the endowed. On the other hand, the colleges, properly so called, were in large part founded by religious denominations, and were intended to promote actively the interests of their several denominations. Nevertheless, hardly any of the colleges make systematic provision for the thorough training of ministers. In New England, Harvard, Yale, Tufts, and Boston University, all endowed institutions, maintain departments of theology; but Bowdoin, Dartmouth, Amherst, Trinity, Wesleyan, Williams, and Brown, all of which were founded with strong religious motives, do not. The theological seminaries are for the most part detached from universities and colleges. Even when a seminary is placed beside a college, it is common to find the seminary property held by a corporation entirely distinct from the corporation of the college, as at Princeton. The detached denominational seminaries are at great disadvantage; and most of them are maintained with difficulty, even if well endowed.

Under these circumstances, it is not surprising that institutions of the higher education, which formerly sent many men into the ministry, no longer do so. You may read on the College Gate that the training of min-

isters for the churches was the prime object in view at the founding of Harvard College; but now the College sends but a small percentage of its graduates into the ministry, although it does better in this respect than most of its neighbors. Amherst, Williams, and Dartmouth have had a similar history. The Theological Department of Yale University is mainly recruited from other colleges and schools, and only to a small extent from Yale College. These facts indicate that the ministry does not hold the high place in the social organization which it used to hold, and that the other professions, learned or scientific, have stronger attractions for well-bred and well-trained young men of force and character. Moreover, the number of serviceable professions has more than doubled, and the university prepares men for them all. Hence a smaller proportion of college men goes into the ministry.

In this hall, sixty-nine years ago, Ralph Waldo Emerson said of the ministry that it was the first office in the world,—a holy office, coeval with the world,—and that Christianity had given us all two inestimable advantages, the Sabbath, the jubilee of the whole world, and the institution of preaching. This doctrine is just as true to-day as it was two generations ago, and it is my faith in it which leads me to-night to try to persuade you that more Harvard men should go into the ministry.

It is more than fifty years since I began to watch the stream of young men going out from Harvard College year by year into the work of the world; and I have therefore had an unusual opportunity to appreciate the common motives and desires of the young men who constitute this living stream. I think the men trained in Harvard College almost universally desire three things for themselves in their subsequent careers: (1)

they want to be serviceable to their families, their associates, and the community; (2) they want to be free to think, say, and do what they really believe in; (3) they want to grow in efficiency and influence all through their lives. Let me enlarge a little on these three desires, which I believe to be common to many Harvard graduates.

The desire to be serviceable does not exclude, or interfere with, the desire for personal success. Indeed, the two go admirably together, and form the modern youth's interpretation of the command, "Thou shalt love thy neighbor *as* thyself." The sentiment often goes to this length,—that none but the eminently serviceable man can rightly be called successful. Secondly, the desire for freedom includes freedom of thought, freedom of speech within the limits of gentle and considerate manners, and freedom in action from all bonds of fear, self-interest, and social, industrial, or professional conformity. Harvard men have been brought up in a place where freedom has been a sort of passion. Naturally, they tend to select occupations in which they can be sure of freedom. Thirdly, the hope to grow during one's whole life includes the desire to be free from a clerical or mechanical routine, and from the narrowing influence of repetitive or automatic labor. This hope for growth implies freedom, and also those conditions of continuous intellectual and spiritual nourishment which make growth possible. The young Harvard graduate wants an occupation for life which promotes a continuous enlargement in knowledge, sympathy, efficiency, and dignity.

This state of mind on the part of the graduates is an indirect result of the atmosphere or general tone of the University. Truth is the motto of the University, and

truth-seeking one of its chief occupations. The University, however, recognizes that its sons may be captivated by different aspects of the truth, and carry into after-life many varieties of opinion, purpose, and aim. When some critic pointed out to President James Walker that graduates of Harvard College were to be found in opposing political parties, in all sorts of religious denominations, and in all schools of thought, and that they were often contending one against the other, Dr. Walker replied that Harvard College did not expect or desire to see all its graduates going into one political party or one religious denomination, or embracing one philosophy or social theory, but did hope that, to whatever party or denomination or school a Harvard graduate might attach himself, he would always be found in the more liberal portion of that party, denomination, or school.

Let us now consider whether the ministry under modern conditions can fairly meet these common wants or desires of Harvard men. In the first place, the minister can be highly serviceable. He has the great function of preaching, the weekly opportunity of setting before a group of well-disposed men and women the best ethical views on all human experiences, common or exceptional, and the highest motives for right action in all the emergencies of life. The good preacher enlightens, cheers, and guides. He may sometimes denounce or condemn; but, in general, he shows men and women how to walk through this world lovingly and nobly. He may sometimes be a warning prophet, but he is chiefly an inspirer of high motives and of good ruling sentiments. In those denominations which permit extemporaneous public prayer the minister possesses that tremendous means of influence. Leading in prayer worthily is the most exalted effort of the human mind. The

power of such prayer is pervasive and enduring beyond all imagination. It may at any moment give to the listener a thrill which runs through all his being, and determines the quality, not only of his own life, but of many of those lives which will derive from his. The minister may be infinitely serviceable through the advice he gives in private to persons anxious, bereaved, tempted, or gone astray. This function of advising requires sympathy, insight, and, above all, wisdom; and these qualities are gained or perfected only through experience, so that the young minister may hope to gain more and more of this influence as his years increase. The minister may also be greatly serviceable by attending to the social functions of a modern church. A well-organized, large city church has a wide-spread effect for social improvement through its various schools, clubs, leagues, entertainments, and hospitalities. Every active church is a centre of good works for the improvement of society, and offers to young people and new-comers many safeguards against evil, as well as incitements to good. When we consider that ethical progress is the only real progress in human society, material gains being chiefly good as they contribute to, or supply the necessary conditions of, moral gains, we realize how direct or immediate is the work of the church, and of the minister at the head of the church, not only for the uplifting of individual men and women, but for the progress of mankind towards nobler living.

When we conceive of a highly successful minister, we ordinarily think of him as the head of a large city church; but it seems to me that the function of the country minister is a fine one, and latterly an improving one in New England. There has set in a real return of thoughtful, cultivated families from the city to the country, es-

pecially during the warmer eight months of the year. The country schools are improving; there are but four or five towns in Massachusetts which have not access to free books; and telephones, good roads, and improved means of transportation are making possible a large amount of human intercourse at isolated houses in the country. Four sorts of men now co-operate to strengthen and enliven the intellectual life in rural communities,—the minister, the physician, the teacher, and the public-spirited man of leisure. The minister can be a leader in all the intellectual life of the countryside. It must be confessed, however, that in many instances the salary of the country minister is too small to enable him to educate his family well, keep himself supplied with books and other means of intellectual growth, and acquit himself appropriately in his high function. Therefore, well-trained young men who possess the needed mental gifts, and who also have some pecuniary resources either by inheritance or by marriage, ought to aspire to the occupation of the country minister, just as well-to-do young men are going into the profession of medicine, not so much with the purpose of practising medicine as of advancing medical knowledge and skill. These two missionary callings ought to attract fitting young men who possess in whatever way a modest independence as regards money.

Freedom of thought and speech for a minister is a somewhat recent acquisition. In former times a young man enlisted in the service of a given church or denomination, and after that enlistment was subject for life to the peculiar discipline and dogmas of that church or denomination. He joined the Roman Church, or the Anglican Church, or the Lutheran Church for life, and had no expectation of changing his opinions or ever

questioning the authority of the church with which he had united. There is now a much greater freedom of choice among denominations for the young man who wants to be a minister. The young Harvard graduate who thinks to be a minister may make his choice among the denominations in accordance with his own temperament, capacities, and intellectual needs, securing that degree of freedom in the future which he personally desires, or needs for his best mental and spiritual development. He must make this first choice with wisdom and well-grounded confidence in himself, else he may sow the seeds of grave afflictions in his subsequent career. In many Protestant denominations the bonds of creed and canon, and even of ritual, have been much relaxed of late years; while in several denominations the minister, once admitted to full standing, enjoys an almost perfect freedom within the limits of gentle manners and of just consideration for the freedom of others. The great progress made within a generation in Biblical criticism, in the comparative study of religions, and in the history of Christianity, has naturally led to a great increase in freedom of thought and speech, not only in the various religious denominations themselves, but in society at large, and has furnished new grounds for that universal toleration which mankind first arrived at through centuries-long experience of the physical and mental horrors of religious intolerance. For more than a century past all history, philosophy, science, and poetry have been reinforcing and amplifying the policy of toleration and the demand of civilized mankind for freedom in religious, as well as political, thought and action. The profession of the ministry has fully shared this general progress of mankind towards freedom. If, then, the young Harvard graduate determines wisely at the

start what amount of freedom of thought he really needs, and is likely to need, for the satisfaction of his religious nature, he need not fear that he will not enjoy as a minister an adequate freedom of thought and speech.

The fateful choice of a denomination used to be made at the beginning of a three years' course of theological study: it can now be postponed till the close. The Harvard Divinity School is an undenominational school of theology, whose graduates are welcome in a great variety of denominations. Its students remain perfectly free during their whole period of professional study. The increase of liberty in the Evangelical denominations is strikingly illustrated in the recent abandonment by the Trustees of the Union Theological Seminary of their former requirement, that all professors in the Seminary subscribe to the Westminster Confession. Even those denominations which are held by a liturgy, or by one or more peculiarly valued rites, to archaic expressions of religious belief, nowadays permit to their clergy a remarkable latitude in interpreting those expressions.

Finally, a devoted and active minister may grow in wisdom and power all his days. An enlarging conception of truth, a wider sympathy, and an ampler hope are the influences which make men grow as years advance. In no profession can a man arrive at the whole truth; but in all professions the way to win more truth is one and the same. The modern world has not arrived at ultimate truth; but it has learnt the way to discover, little by little, step by step, more truth. It is the way of the inductive philosophy. A young university graduate in these days who has mastered this way to new truth,—new to him, or perhaps new to the world,—and believes in this way, has in him one great element

of perpetual growth, and the kind of growth will be the same, whatever his profession,—the church, the law, medicine, engineering, architecture, business, or whatever other calling. In any profession we now know the way to personal, mental and moral enlargement. The co-operative spirit is also in every profession a way to enlargement, and this spirit belongs to no profession in higher degree than to the ministry; and the hopeful, optimistic spirit is enlarging, and no profession ought more perfectly and constantly to foster this spirit than the ministry, because the ministry is always dealing with the best sides of human nature and the best aspects of human society, and is always holding up and promulgating the highest spiritual ideals. A minister who is not an optimist must have been looking backward and not forward, down and not up.

I believe, then, that the minister's life may be serviceable, free, and enlarging, and this belief is with me the result of experience as well as of educational and social theory. I have known well, or have observed somewhat closely, a large number of ministers in many different denominations. Some I have watched from their youth to their age, and have therefore had the chance to compare them at the different stages of life. Those of them who have had that amount of freedom which contented them, have possessed the natural gifts the minister needs, and have kept their minds full-charged by reading and observation, and their sympathies quick and warm, have grown all their lives in mental stature, wisdom, and power. They have also mellowed with age; they have grown more sympathetic towards other beliefs, other religious practices, and other religions. The ministry sweetens and softens a man, making him more sympathetic and more loving. It is not a stren-

uous life, in the vulgar sense; but it is a full, varied, and bountiful life. It destroys nothing, hurts nothing, and poisons nothing. It crowds out evil by fostering good. It deals with the things that abide,—faith, hope, and love. It works on behalf of the ethical principles on which real progress depends, and in the development of which real progress consists. In spite of the illusions of pleasure, wealth, and material prosperity, we all believe that the most durable satisfactions of life and the realest gains of mankind are ethical. Therefore, to become a serviceable, free, growing minister is a worthy ambition for any intelligent and high-minded young man.

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